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March 2019, Vol. 23 No. 1

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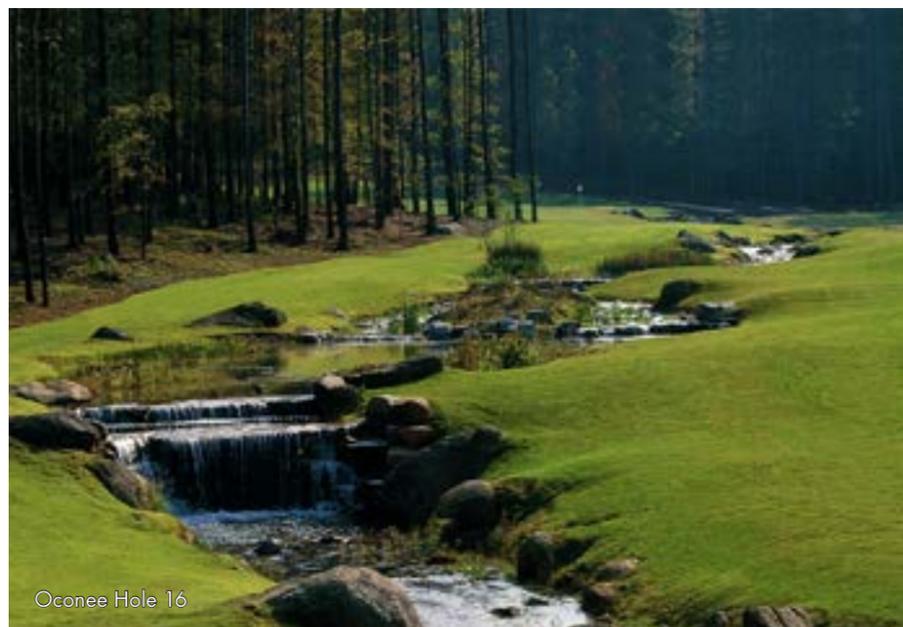
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Features

- 14** **Start Your Spring Practice Earlier**
Neal Kotlarek Finds The Best Places Under Roof
- 18** **Reynolds Lake Oconee Is Just Right**
Dan Vukelich's Tempting Tour Of A Georgia Peach
- 24** **Toptracer Makes an Impact at Mistwood**
Neal Kotlarek On Space Age Tracking



Oconee Hole 16

Cover: The Landing Holes 4 and 5

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Departments

- 5** **Opening Shot**
- 6** **The Good Stuff**
Todd Mrowice Surveys The Best And Brightest
- 8** **Instruction**
Nicole Jeray On Practicing Like A Pro
- 10** **Sweet Home Chicago**
A Season Preview And More
- 28** **Destinations**
Summerlin Bids To Outshine Las Vegas
- 31** **GOLFChicago Map And Directory**
- 36** **On The Shelf**
Doctors Of The Game
- 37** **On The Corkscrews**
Stephen Hawk Pops The Cork
- 38** **Final Putt**
Barry Cronin On The Canal Shores Land Grab Of 2019

OPENING SHOT

DAVE AND TIM

Maybe the ancients had it right, designating March 1 as New Year's Day. Winter this year has been a heavyweight, punching hard and often like Joe Frazier, right in front of you, going for the kill instead of the clinch. Freezing is no way to start a calendar, as anyone who visits Florida can tell you.

But winter eventually punches itself out. The sun creeps higher in the sky, Pebble Beach appears on the magic lantern, and blessedly, the robin gleefully sings its song.

So does golf, with the seductive call of a siren, luring us back for another series of go-rounds pursuing the impossibility of perfection. The advent of the golf dome – an invention on par with the wheel, to be sure – allows us to cheat the calendar, to gain months on nature and hit the ground, when it's finally unfrozen, running.



"Yes, this is an emergency room. But for people, not golf clubs."

That's where this opening issue of our 23rd season comes in. We take you inside Chicago's best practice areas, including the domes, with a long look at the revolutionary Toptracer Range installation at the Mistwood Golf Dome in Bolingbrook. No longer need one imagine how good that last strike was. Now, the arc drawn on the screen and the numbers on the chart tell the happy story – or of the need for improvement.

We also have a pair of travel stories featuring resorts for those who believe they're ready to go now, featuring Reynolds Lake Oconee in Georgia and Summerlin near Las Vegas. Each is less likely to have snow than your backyard.

If you're not ready, LPGA veteran Nicole Jeray, now teaching at Mistwood, has an innovative instructional feature on how to practice.

We also have a look at new equipment in The Good Stuff, a review of Billy Dettlaff's "Doctors of the Game," a thorough tome on the golf profession, the latest news and notes from around the area, Stephen Hawk's review of what wine goes with a long winter's night, and a provocative column by Barry Cronin on the bizarre battle for the 10th hole at Canal Shores, the municipal short course winding through Evanston and Wilmette.

Put a log on the fire and enjoy.

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THE GOOD STUFF

Brought to You by



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Mizuno Goes Light

Mizuno sure knows how to cater to those that carry. The new ultra-lightweight K1-LO stand bag combines a sleek look (five colors available) with only the essentials that you need. Full-length dividers, dual shoulder straps, and a waterproof valuables pocket are part of the 2.7 pound back feather.

\$220.00

Snake in the Fairway

The company that brought a CNC precision-milled face to a driver now debuts the same in its fairway metals with Cobra's King F9 Speedback. The sole weight structure lowers the center of gravity by 10 percent and Cobra's famous Baffle Rails combine for a lower center and faster club/ball speeds. Available in adjustable 3-4 or 4-5 models.

\$269.00

Feeling Exotic?

The EXS line is the latest addition to the Tour Edge Exotics family. Adjustable sole weights make up a Flight Tuning System and Rollface Technology creates straighter shots, even with off center contact. Available in 9.5 and 10.5 degree adjustable heads and with MCA Tensei CK Blue 2G stock shafts.

\$299.99



This is Big, Bertha

One of the most recognized names in golf equipment is packing a punch again with the Callaway Big Bertha hybrid. Revolutionary Jailbreak Technology incorporates two internal bars that stiffen the body, creating faster ball speed and longer distance. Available in hybrid numbers 3-8 with UST Mamiya Recoil ESX stock shafts.

\$269.99

Wear Your Mojo

Skechers golf shoe game is strong. For several years they have produced some of most comfortable spiked and spikeless options on the market. The new Go Golf Mojo Elite has GRIPFLEX spikeless technology along with a TPU outsole. Ultra-lightweight and water resistant.

\$100.00



Cleveland Rocks the Soft

Cleveland expands on its wildly popular Huntington Beach line with the new Huntington Beach SOFT collection. The flagship model, the 11, is a slant neck mallet with two stability wings. Its soft feel creates a truer roll and more consistent distance.

\$129.99

Become Mr. Cool

As far as style and materials go, TravisMathew might be the hottest brand in golf apparel. No exception is the full-zip Scorpio jacket. With half-elastic cuffs and a welt pocket on the side, this jacket easily goes from on course to on a date. Lightweight and moisture-dispersing fabric. Available in black and heather grey.

\$150.00



A Winner from Wilson

The latest launch from Wilson Staff is a game improvement iron that still maintains a sleek overall look. The D7 combines technology and aesthetics from the award-winning FG Tour V6 and C300 irons. RE-AKT technology provides power where it's needed most, giving you superior distance.

Steel, \$599.99; graphite, \$699.99





Practice Like a Pro

I've watched many amateurs and even professionals beat balls mindlessly on the range. Hit and rake, hit and rake. There's no purpose or goal except attempting to find something that works, and more likely grooving bad swings.

If you want to be a better golfer, it's imperative to practice smart. Mindful, efficient practice begins with a goal. What am I trying to accomplish in this practice session? Is it mechanics, distance control, or just warming up my muscles for the round?

Mechanics – The Practice Box

If I am trying to make a change or work anything mechanical, I do this in my Practice Box. My goal here is to improve

my faulty swing mechanic. Lots of thinking and rehearsing occurs here, and I'm not overly concerned with where the ball is going. The Practice Box always consists of alignment rods (or you can use golf clubs). One on my ball line at my target, and the other parallel to that at my feet. It is imperative to have a target and know 100 percent that my alignment is accurate. My body and brain must both be pointing at the same target. Otherwise I'll cause more swing flaws. Lined up properly, I can focus solely on my technique and work on making the change I need to become a better ball striker. At least two purposeful practice swings for every one ball hit. Slow, deliberate swings. All drills are done in the Practice Box.

NO Mechanics – The Play Box

Thinking about mechanics while playing golf leads to guided, inconsistent shots. In order to take mindful range practice to the golf course, I weave playing golf into my practice sessions. This is done in the Play Box. Here, I'm picking out a target, visualizing my shot, feeling my shot, going through my complete routine as if I was on the golf course. No thinking about technique in the Play Box. After five to 10 shots in my Practice Box, I go to my Play Box for one to three golf shots. Taking quality range time to the golf course is easy when I practice this way.

Chipping and putting practice is very similar to my Practice Box, Play Box method. Focused practice on mechanics combined

with golf course scenarios. Chip or putt to one hole from one spot, working on a certain mechanic or just grooving proper technique, again using an alignment rod to ensure proper direction to my target. Later I will take three balls and chip to three different holes. Picking my landing area, visualizing my shot, seeing the trajectory and the ball roll out to the bottom of the hole. Always, I go through my routine as if I was on the golf course. Hit three shots, pick them up, do it again. Competition with friends is also a great way to improve your short game!

Wedges – Distance Control

Normally I hit wedge shots to head covers or colored hula hoops placed at various yardages. This is effective practice but now with Toptracer technology at the Mistwood Golf Dome, wedge practice is even smarter! Toptracer tracks every golf ball hit and provides me with statistical feedback which is super accurate! I now know exactly how far I hit each wedge shot versus eyeballing a little short or a little long of the head cover. It's shocking how much my distance control has improved in just a few weeks at the Mistwood Golf Dome.

Toptracer is not only making my practice sessions more effective, but more fun too! Immediate, accurate feedback makes golf more enjoyable. I'm learning to control my ball flight, zero in on in-between club distances, an even increase my ball speed! Practice has become more fun and way smarter at the Mistwood Golf Dome. Now I realize why some LPGA players travel with a Trackman. Smart practice.

Mindful, smart practice will make you a better golfer! If you are mindlessly beating balls at the range searching for answers, see a golf professional to give you some goals. Better yet, visit me at the Mistwood Golf Dome this winter and you'll enjoy the game more!

Berwyn native Nicole Jeray first played on the LPGA Tour as an amateur in 1991 and turned pro in 1993. She teaches at the Mistwood Golf Dome and Mistwood Golf Club when she isn't on tour.



Mechanics – The Practice Box



NO Mechanics – The Play Box



Wedges – Distance Control

Sweet Home Chicago

It's a Big Year Ahead

It always seems strange when the BMW Championship – for a century known as the Western Open – is played away from Chicago, even though that was the case for most of the storied tournament's first 60 years.

This is a year that will be familiar, not strange. The BMW has driven back into town for at least the next two years, with a stop at Medinah Country Club from August 15-18 and at Olympia Fields Country Club in 2020. All signs point to a different sponsor at Olympia Fields, but is the multi-million question.

This year, though, marks a return to a storied site that last hosted the Western in 1966, when Billy Casper won the title six days after vanquishing Arnold Palmer in the U.S. Open playoff at the Olympic Club in San Francisco.

Much has changed since then, including a series of renovations to Medinah No. 3, the most recent before the 2012 Ryder Cup. The old Tom Bendelow layout – with the back nine realigned by Roger Packard before the 1988 U.S. Senior Open and fiddled with since – should provide a solid test to the best 70 players on the American tour, starting with defending champion Keegan Bradley.

That's the highlight of the year, but there's plenty before that in and around the Chicago area. Western Golf debuts a new tournament on the Web.com Tour, the Evans Scholars Invitational, from May 23-26, the weekend of Memorial Day, at The Glen Club. Like the BMW, it will benefit the foundation created by Chick Evans nearly a century ago.

The John Deere Classic, the small-town tournament with the big-league charity impact for the Quad Cities, holds its 49th renewal on July 11-14 at TPC Deere Run in Silvis. Michael Kim is the defending champion.

Farther afield from the Loop, the U.S. Senior Open will be played on a college campus for the first time, with the Warren Course at Notre Dame, a Bill Coore-Ben Crenshaw design only a couple of field goals from the Golden Dome, the host from June 27-30. Those who want routine senior golf can venture to University Ridge in Madison, Wis., the week before, where Steve Stricker hosts and tries to win the American Family Insurance Championship from June 21-23.

The Illinois Women's Open at Mistwood will celebrate its 25th anniversary, most likely in mid-July. The defending

champion is Californian Hannah Kim, who scored the victory in one of her first starts as a professional after her career at Northwestern.

The Illinois Open turns 70 on August 5, with The Glen Club and Ridgemoor the dual sites, but Vince India is unlikely to defend given his Web.com Tour status. But Dakun Chung will be eager to defend his Illinois PGA Championship title when it moves to Ruth Lake Country Club for the first time from August 26-29.

Finally, the amateur scene abounds with high-quality play featuring the star multi-millionaires of tomorrow. The Western Amateur goes back to Point O' Woods in Millburg, Mich., July 30-August 3, for the first time since 2008; the Women's Western Amateur makes its first stop at Royal Melbourne in Hawthorn Woods from July 16-20; and the Western Junior camps at Rich Harvest Farms in Sugar Grove on June 17-20 for the second time.

Three Area Youths Qualify for Drive, Chip and Putt

Joshua Pehl of Sugar Grove, Joseph Luchtenburg of West Chicago and Luciano Giangrossi of Evanston, all of whom are members of Youth on Course's Chicago-area chapter, will compete at Augusta National Golf Club in April in the pre-Masters Drive, Chip and Putt contest. Pehl is in the Boys 14-15 age group, Luchtenburg in the Boys 12-13 age group and Giangrossi in the Boys 7-9 bracket.

Youth on Course is a non-profit organization providing young people with subsidized golf, college scholarships, paid internships and a caddie program. Adam Heckeck, Youth on Course CEO, states that some 50,000 members compete in the program nationally. The group has awarded 223 students with college scholarships to date, totaling more than \$1.4 million in financial support.

PXG Comes to Northbrook

Bob Parsons, the Vietnam veteran who parleyed his GoDaddy.com firm into a billion dollars and got into golf, among other pursuits, has opened a Parsons Xtreme Golf fitting studio in Northbrook, in the heart of the Chicago area's high-end golf clientele.

Down Memory Lane

Bill Ogden Played 'Lights On' Golf

North Shore Country Club is rightly proud of its heritage, but not even the member who will bust his buttons extolling the virtues of the course and club may know that Bill Ogden, their longtime head professional, was among the first to play night golf on the PGA Tour.

Night as in under the lights. The concept didn't start with the made-for-TV "Showdown at Sherwood," featuring Tiger Woods, in the early 2000s. Back in 1969, amidst the battle for control of tour golf between the players and the PGA of America, the PGA slated a tournament at Sunol Valley Country Club near Oakland, Calif., to run against the Los Angeles Open, which had signed up with the name players.

Before this battle of wedges could take place, peace broke out, and it was decided to play both under the PGA banner. It so happened that heavy frosts hit Oakland on tournament week, and play was delayed. But Sunol Valley had an ace in the hole: a \$325,000 lighting system for night play, floodlights with 269 big bulbs mounted high on palm trees on the layout.

Ogden, who was tied for the lead with Richard Martinez after a 2-under 70, had one of the later tee times on Friday.

"I've never played golf at night, and I don't think many of the other guys have," Ogden told reporters. "I think it will affect our judgments of distances and reading the greens. The course figures to be playing longer at night."

Ogden played his back nine after sunset and scored even-par 72 to take the lead at the halfway point by a stroke over playing partner Dick Lotz, who used his feet to gauge the slope of putts. And Ogden found an advantage that others did not.

"Generally a late starter can see every little spike mark and heel print on the greens," Ogden said. "At night you can't see them."

The sage of North Shore also made this prediction: "I think someday we will have a major open tournament played completely at night. I think it will be fine."

Ogden shared fifth place, while Lotz' fancy footwork contributed to his one-stroke victory over Don Whitt.

– Tim Cronin



Medinah Country Club, hosting this August's BMW Championship, was last on the international stage with the 2012 Ryder Cup, won by the European team. (Tim Cronin)



He personally introduced his product line to Chicagoans last September with a splash, introducing opening-night attendees to four of PXG's representatives on the PGA and LPGA Tours – twice major titlist Zach Johnson, 2014 FedEx Cup champion Billy Horschel, 2011 Masters champion Charl Schwartzel and three-time Solheim Cup member Gerina Piller.

"I feel this fitting studio will be a huge success," Parsons told *GOLFChicago*. "Chicago is a great market for our product line. There are lots of avid golfers here. And avid golfers all want to improve. We can confidently say that PXG clubs are an improvement over anything our competition is offering."

A self-described golf junkie, Parsons claims to have personally tried out the equipment of most every other major manufacturer through the years. He has stated that he once spent \$350,000 in a single year seeking out clubs that best suited his game. Certain that technological improvements were possible, Parsons hired away two designers from Ping and told them to spare no expense ("without being

crazy on cost") on the development of a better club. The result was a radically thin-faced iron with a cavity in the middle – as opposed to the standard cavity in the back – of the face. The cavity is filled with a thermoplastic polymer. The results? "I was certain that we had developed the best club in the world," Parsons said.

The self-made billionaire Parsons has taken the Giving Pledge – a promise to commit at least half his fortune to charity. His PXG for Heroes initiative provides special discount pricing to the men and women of the military, Coast Guard, law enforcement, firefighters and EMTs.

PXG Northbrook studio (www.PXG.com or (847) 480-4653), the firm's first, offers personalized fitting services with two hitting bays, a putting green and a retail area, managed by a team of master fitters.

BMW Tourney Volunteers Needed

Some 500 volunteer positions for the August 15-18 BMW Championship at Medinah Country Club remain to be filled.

"Volunteers are essential to our success and our charitable mission to support the Evans Scholars Foundation, which awards college scholarships to caddies from modest means," said Western Golf Association senior VP of tournaments Vince Pellegrino.

Volunteers – and there will be 2,000 in all – can pick from any of 22 categories to serve in, though prime departments, including gallery control, fill up fast. Those applying must be at least 18 and commit to work at least three shifts, which range from four to six hours in length, during the week, which starts with practice rounds on August 13.

The volunteer clothing and souvenir package costs \$129, and includes two Peter Millar golf shirts, a Peter Millar outerwear piece, a hat or visor, commemorative pin, two one-day grounds tickets, invitation to a volunteer party, food and beverage vouchers, and the credential, valid for the week.

Interested? Go to www.BMWChampionship.com and click on the "volunteers" tap. The deadline is June 15.

First Tee Adds School Program

Nicor Gas has teamed with The First Tee of Greater Chicago to provide golf instruction to 56 public elementary schools across the metro area. Announced in November, The First Tee National School Program is today a part of the physical education instruction at these schools. Among the school systems impacted by the investment is Evanston-Skokie School District 65, which incorporates both the instruction aspect of the program as well as The First Tee's Nine Core Values. Evanston-Skokie School District 65 encompasses 5,000 elementary students.

"Nicor Gas is committed to supporting the communities where we live and serve," said Melvin Williams, president of Nicor Gas. "We are excited to partner with The First Tee, as well as the Chicago public school systems in an educational program that helps children build character and instills life-enhancing values that strengthen the communities in which they live."

The First Tee is a 501(c)(3) non-profit youth development organization whose mission is to impact the lives of young people by providing educational programs that build character, instill values and promote healthy choices through the game of golf.

Chip Shots

Batavia-based Tour Edge has signed Champions Tour regular Scott McCarron to a logo and club deal for 2019. He used Tour Edge Exotics CBX hybrid clubs to win twice on the 50-plus circuit last year, finishing second in the Schwab Cup points and boodle chase. "I love the Exotics hybrid and what it has done for my game, it is a great fit and a low-spinning, hot-faced hybrid that has me hitting more hybrids off the tee and in general because I have complete faith in the club," McCarron said. Meanwhile, Tim Lehman used an Exotics CBX 119 hybrid in winning at Hualalai in January. ... Condolences to the family and legion of friends of longtime Cog Hill superintendent Ken Lapp, who died at 82 on January 18. He'd worked for Jemsek Golf since 1949, including the last six years on the Pine Meadow crew.

– Tim Cronin and Neal Kotlarek

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Not that many years ago, the definition of an indoor practice facility was simply a basement, a swath of AstroTurf and a net 30 feet away from the pad. A low-handicapper friend taught me the underlying perils of this system when, after countless hours spent honing his swing during the dead of winter, he discovered by early spring that he had perfected a snarling duck hook that took shape about 40 yards off the tee.

Chicagoans recovering from the perils of the polar vortex are fortunate to now have spectacular options far removed from those days of yore. Heat lamps and cozy domes have ushered in a new era of practice facilities across the metro area, many complete with full-service restaurants and micro brews.

Technology has inevitably played a role in the continued evolution of these practice centers. As chronicled in a companion story, Mistwood Golf Dome now employs the Toptracer Range system on all of its hitting bays to provide golfers with the ability to hone skills using real-time analytics data while playing virtual golf at some of the world's most famous courses.

Topgolf facilities are as much a party zone as a practice complex. In Naperville, over 100 climate-controlled hitting bays are complemented by over 200 HDTVs, free Wi-Fi, a full-service restaurant and multiple bars and even a rooftop terrace with a fire pit. There's another Topgolf in Wood Dale and, late this year, a third will open in Schaumburg on the former site of one of Motorola's headquarters buildings.

The golf simulator concept came into being about two decades ago, and has caught on as golf ball-tracking technology – and high-definition projection TV – has improved. Today, slapping a ball into a soft-wall mat with a picture projected on it is to many the next-best thing to a dome experience or actually playing. The leading public facilities in the area are included here (many private courses in the Chicago area have added simulators in recent years in a bid to get closer to year-round operation).

Some outdoor facilities are also



Start Your Spring Practice Earlier

By Neal Kotlarek

year-round, not just because they stay open in insane weather, but because they're effectively half-and-half operations, with indoor dining and/or lounge areas to go with heated outdoor hitting bays.

Here's a look at some of the best year 'round golf practice centers in the Chicago area offering a chance to see one's ball-flight:

Des Plaines Golf Center

853 N. River Rd.
Des Plaines
(847) 803-4653
www.dpparks.org

Operated by the Des Plaines Park District, this 1.5-acre facility is perennially ranked among the top 50 stand-alone driving ranges in America. Eighty lighted and heated hitting stations are spread over three tiers. Golf lessons and custom club fitting are available through certified GolfTEC personal coaches. Adjacent to the golf range, Club Casa Café serves up great food and beverages in a sports bar setting.

Mistwood Golf Dome

730 N. Bolingbrook Dr.
Bolingbrook
(630) 739-7600

mistwoodgolfdome.com

The sister property of Mistwood Golf Club, this elegant Bolingbrook facility was significantly upgraded last autumn with improved lighting and the introduction of Toptracer technology – the same system used to show real-time graphics on PGA Tour and LPGA Tour telecasts. The sports dome is 60,000 square feet, with 30 hitting bays, each equipped with large-screen HDTVs to enjoy favorite sports events while you practice. Managed by the entire staff of PGA professionals from Mistwood's Performance Center.

Attached to the dome is McWethy's Sports Bar, one of southwest suburbia's premier entertainment and dining establishments. Slow-cooked ribs, burgers and beverages are served in a cozy setting that, across the hall, offers an off-track betting parlor with 58 HDTVs.

White Pines Golf Dome

500 W. Jefferson St.
(at White Pines Golf Course)
Bensenville
(630) 766-0304

www.whitepinesgolfdome.com

At 100 yards by 100 yards and long considered the gold standard in Chicago indoor golf practice facilities, White Pines features 48 hitting stations on two levels, five target greens, a 45-foot long contoured putting green and five state-of-the-art GOLFZON virtual golf simulators. Owned and operated by sports management firm KemperSports, the dome offers individual and group instruction led by 2006 Illinois PGA teacher of the year Chuck Lynch. The dome holds demo days and events on a regular basis, and also serves up sandwiches and cold beverages.

Diversey Driving Range

141 W. Diversey St.

Chicago
(312) 742-7929

www.diversey.cpdgolf.com

While not technically an indoor driving range, this popular lakefront facility is open year-round and features lighted,



heated mat areas and target greens. As a bonus, the upper deck area provides amazing views of downtown Chicago and Lake Michigan.

Topgolf

699 W. Thorndale Ave.
Wood Dale; (630) 595-4653

and

3211 Odyssey Court
Naperville
(630) 596-1000

www.topgolf.com

These year-round complexes emphasize fun and great food along with golf practice. The ranges feature microchip-implanted golf balls allowing players to earn points by successfully hitting target greens or tee shot areas. Combine this state-of-the-art practice facility with great food and a dazzling sports bar and you have the hottest concept in golf practice. Hitting bays are covered, lighted and climate-controlled. Clinics and individual lessons feature slow-motion video analysis.

Highland Park Field House

2205 Skokie Valley Rd.

Highland Park
(847) 404-9846

Open weekdays for golf practice. This multi-sports complex caters to golfers mornings through mid-afternoon, then features practice and games for other sports, including softball. Cash only.

Links & Tees Indoor Golf Dome

880 W. Lake St.

Addison

(630) 233-7275, option 4

<https://addisonparks.org/links-tees-indoor-golf-dome/>

This two-tiered heated facility is operated by the Addison Park District, featuring target banners, HDTVs and indoor chipping and putting areas. Customized group and private lessons available from area instructors.

Buffalo Grove Golf and Sports Center

801 McHenry Rd.

Buffalo Grove

(847) 353-7575

<http://bgparks.org/facilities/golf.aspx>

This heated 100-yard by 60-yard dome includes a driving range and putting green. There are 32 hitting bays on the two-tier range, a 1,950-square foot green, and a professional instruction staff on hand to improve your game.

SPG Green Garden Golf Dome

9511 West Manhattan-Monee Rd.

Frankfort

(815) 469-3350

www.greengardenc.com/golf-dome/

Among the largest and best-lighted domes, Green Garden is a fully-heated facility with two-tiered hitting areas and 42 hitting stations, with 80 yards of ball flight. The complex also includes a separate area for chipping and putting. PGA professional Randy Wexter is the man to see for lessons. The nearby clubhouse offers year-round dining options, including a Sunday breakfast buffet.

Stony Creek Golf Course

5850 W. 103rd St.
Oak Lawn
(708) 857-2433
<https://www.golfstonycreek.com/>
Stony Creek, the Oak Lawn Park District's course, has a sheltered outdoor hitting area open when it's not bitter cold, plus a pair of simulators for practice at any time at just \$20 hourly on weekdays, along with food in the main clubhouse.

The leading golf simulator operations:

Halfway House Indoor Golf

555 S. York St.
Elmhurst
(331) 642-8050
<https://halfwayhousegolf.com/>
Four state-of-art simulators with high-tech graphics provide access to over 85 world-famous golf courses from as near as Cog Hill's Dubsdread to as far as Taghazout in Morocco. You can also give Bandon Dunes, Pebble Beach or the Old Course at St. Andrews a whirl. The facility is open seven days a week, with a rate of \$40 per hour per bay. Halfway House suggests it takes a little under an hour for someone to play 18 holes.

Indoor Golf Links of America

16356 104th Ave.
Orland Park
(708) 403-4040
<https://indoorgolfinks.net>
There are 14 simulators at this busy destination, open 86 hours a week. Said to be the largest such facility in the world, there are 72 courses to pick from – a similar selection to Halfway House's list – and daytime rates of \$25 an hour weekdays and \$35 all day on weekends. There are tournaments for those with established indoor handicaps, and a restaurant featuring burgers, beer and more.

Legends Indoor Golf

2091 63rd St.
Downers Grove
(630) 409-1220
<https://legendsindoorgolf.com/>
Located in the Meadowbrook Shopping Center, Legends opens at 7 a.m. on weekends with eight simulators with



Foresight 2018 FSX Software available. PGA professional Kyle Rich is ready to give lessons. There's also a full-size putting green under roof, plus the usual restaurant options.

Play 18 Chicago

17 N. Wabash Ave.
Chicago
(312) 251-0540
<http://play18chicago.com/>
In the heart of the Loop, Play 18 Chicago features a quartet of PGA Tour Simulators featuring more than 50 courses, as well as driving bays with swing analysis technology. Office types can rent clubs. You can reserve time online the same day. There's also valet parking at \$10 for four hours.

Tee 2 Green

11173 Huntley Rd.
Huntley
(224) 650-8111
<https://www.t2gindoorgolf.com/>
Six simulators with an array of 85 courses and full swing analysis is the centerpiece of what the owners call "a sports bar on steroids." There's more to play, including pool and darts, along with plenty to eat and drink and a place to just hang out and watch a game on big-screen HDTV. Opens 11:30 a.m. daily.

Among the outdoor ranges that have covered hitting areas and heaters softening winter's blow:

Cog Hill

12994 Archer Ave.
Lemont
(630) 264-4455
www.coghillgolf.com
20 heated bays

Green Valley

26W 101 Lake St.
Hanover Park
(630) 289-6600
<https://www.greenvalleygolfrange.com/>
20 heated bays

Libertyville Sports Complex

1950 U.S. 45
Libertyville
(847) 367-1502
<https://libertyvillesportscomplex.com/159/Sports-Complex>
40 heated bays

St. Andrews

2241 Ill. 59
West Chicago
(630) 231-3160
<https://www.standrewsgc.com/>
driving-range/
10 heated bays

Skokie Sports Park

3459 Oakton St.
Skokie
(847) 674-1500
<https://www.skokieparks.org/skokie-sports-park>
11 heated bays

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Reynolds Lake Oconee is Just Right

By Dan Vukelich

There's something exciting about discovering a new golf destination, one that's warm and sunny, where the predominant colors are green and blue, where it's cool in the morning, not too hot in the afternoon and the winds are light throughout the day.

It's the golf equivalent of the Goldilocks Zone, what NASA calls a planet that's close enough to its sun to sustain life, but not so hot as to fry it.

When you find such a place, it's time for the road-trip planning to begin.

Such a Goldilocks locale exists in Georgia, about 85 miles east of Atlanta's Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport, where decades ago Mercer Reynolds III launched a recreational paradise after the damming of the Oconee River.

The Reynolds Lake Oconee development, now owned by Met Life, boasts thousands of homes tucked into the woods, a Ritz-Carlton hotel, guest cottages and condos, fishing, boating, a shooting and sporting club, tennis academy, kayaking and a modern equipment fitting and training center, Reynolds Kingdom of Golf presented by TaylorMade, with the highest of high-tech gadgets.

And the golf? Reynolds's six golf courses were designed by a virtual Mount Rushmore of golf architects: Jack Nicklaus, Rees Jones, Bob Cupp – who designed two of the layouts – Tom Fazio and Jim Engh. (If you don't know Engh, he designed Carne Golf Links in Belmullet, County Mayo, Ireland, plus three U.S. courses on *Golf Magazine's* 2016-2017 list





Great Waters Hole 11



The Preserve Hole 3



The National Hole 15

of the Top 100 You Can Play.)

A la carte, Reynolds Lake Oconee’s green fees run between \$160 and \$280. Peak season is March 15-July 13 and August 29-November 30, but buddy-trip golfers know real road-trip values lie in stay-and-play packages. On that score, Reynolds Lake Oconee has plenty of deals starting at between \$219 and \$359 per person per night for a party of four in a two-bedroom condo or four-bedroom cottage.

All golf packages include breakfast, one round a day, cart, unlimited use of practice facilities, and discounted replays, free wifi, use of the fitness center and access to the best swing-analysis and club-fitting center this side of the PGA Tour.

Packages can be built around golf alone, golf and shooting, or golf, shooting and fishing/boating/tennis.

Like I said, let the trip planning begin.

Reynolds Lake Oconee is located in Greene County, Ga., about 70 miles east of downtown Atlanta. With only 17,281 people in the county, this qualifies as rural. The property started as 10,000 acres of undeveloped yellow-pine woodland but that all changed in 1979 when the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers dammed the Oconee River and turned it into Georgia’s second-largest lake.

This was a boon to Mercer Reynolds III, who envisioned his farmland, suddenly benefitting from 374 miles of shoreline,

turning into a residential getaway for golfers and other lovers of the good life. The concept of Reynolds Lake Oconee was born. The 19,000-acre Lake Oconee, with fingers of water extending into countless inlets, is now a spectacular sportsman’s paradise featuring plenty of undeveloped rolling pine forest still available to build that vacation or retirement home you’ve been dreaming about.

Over time, one golf course after another was added, and sporting grounds with clay shooting,

competitions and 75 different clubs, including a veterans’ group. The nearby towns of Greensboro, Madison and Milledgeville, plus Athens and Augusta – the latter is 82 miles down I-20 – offer all the shopping, dining and small-town charm you’d expect of Georgia.

It’s a place where an overcoat is rarely needed. Weather records for Greensboro, the nearest town, show that August generally sees temperatures averaging in the mid 80s. Through mid-November,



Oconee Hole 1

archery, fishing and boating were developed. The Ritz-Carlton Reynolds Lake Oconee, a five-star hotel with its own level of dining and spa pampering, was an early centerpiece of the destination. Reynolds found himself overextended in the Great Recession, which is how Met Life acquired the property.

There’s a different owner now, but the same vision. For residents, there’s a robust schedule of theater and music productions, art festivals and

temperatures stay in the high 60s to low 70s. The average low in January is 38 degrees – which means half the time, the nights are warmer. A season’s average snowfall is one inch.

By March, while Chicagoans brace for the season’s final snowstorm (or two), Greensboro’s weather is back into the high 60s to low 70s. Average snowfall: 1 inch. And the sun shines 217 days a year. As folks at Reynolds Lake Oconee like to say, “Come

for a weekend, stay for a lifetime.”

The golf is both ample and exceptional. Visitors have their choice of five pedigreed courses that play hide-and-seek with the shores of Lake Oconee as they wind through pine-studded hills. There’s a sixth course if you’re lucky enough to be invited by a member to play The Creek Club, a private club.

“Reynolds Lake Oconee is one of the most comprehensive golf facilities in the country,” said Wes Forester, the club’s director of golf. “With 117 holes

Nicklaus’ company started last June and is expected to be completed by fall. Like every course in the sprawling complex, the par-72 layout has multiple tees to guarantee everyone can find a fair test. In Great Waters’ case, distances vary from 5,272 to 7,073 yards, with the highest rating and slope 73.7 and 134, respectively.

The Landing was the first course in the Reynolds area, opened as Port Armor Resort & Country Club in 1986. Reynolds acquired the Bob Cupp design and

since it opened in 1988, this par-72 adventure has just 20 bunkers but plenty of false fronts and swales to make up for its lack of sand. It’s just 6,698 yards from the back tees, but the rating is a robust 72.3 and the slope 132 from there. Uniquely, The Preserve features a short course within a course. The Quick Six, a loop of six holes, each under 130 yards, can be played in about an hour.

The Oconee Course, a Rees Jones design routed mostly along the Lake Oconee shoreline, is the newest public course, opened in 2002. It stresses risk-reward via shots over inlets or corners of doglegs. Creeks or the lake itself come into play on nine holes of the par-72 test. Jones was involved in a 2013 renovation that reshaped tree canopies to open up fairways. From the tips, it’s 7,029 yards, rated 73.5 with a 137 slope.

The National has three nines designed by Tom Fazio, all featuring significant changes in elevation, some as great as 60 feet. The Ridge and Bluff nines were the original 18 holes in



Reynolds Creek Hole 5

to choose from the golf experience combines variety, challenge and natural beauty in a rare collection of courses suitable for players of all skill levels.”

Start with Great Waters, the Jack Nicklaus Signature Course that put Reynolds on the golf map in 1992. Twenty-six years later, it’s still ranked No. 41 on *Golf Magazine’s* Top 100 You Can Play list. The front nine is mostly parkland but the lake tests you on nos. 11 through 18. A renovation overseen by

renamed it in 2005, then renovated it in 2006 and 2013. The par-72 course has a bit of a linky Scottish feel. Amazingly at its debut, it was ranked No. 2 in Georgia – second only to Augusta National. It can stretch to 7,029 yards with a 74.4 rating and 138 slope from the tips.

Cupp was brought back to design The Preserve, with U.S. Open champions Fuzzy Zoeller and Hubert Green adding their insight. Updated three times



The National Cottages



The National Tavern



Sandy Creek

continued on page 30

Although some golf fans might not be readily familiar with the Toptracer brand name, the product itself has impressed all who view the game on TV. Consider the last PGA or LPGA tournament you watched. You surely recall that spectacular red or blue swirl that tracks the players' tee shots. The graphic depicts in real time the moment the tee shot is hit, the peak of the ball's flight and then its descent to the landing area. That's Toptracer technology – called Protracer when the software was first introduced by a Swedish group to the European tour in 2006.

Today, a scant 13 years after Toptracer's unveiling, guests at the Mistwood Golf Dome in Bolingbrook can be just like the pros and utilize the complex data tabulated by the Toptracer system for fun and as a learning tool. More than just that pretty animated arc that you see on the video screen, the software application



starts with a quartet of high-speed video cameras positioned above the hitting bay which registers the flight of the ball and proceeds to transfer a dizzying array of information to a TV screen. This data includes ball speed, trajectory, shot shape and distance. From an entertainment standpoint, these data points allow golfers to play games, have contests with companions and even play a virtual round at some of the greatest golf courses in the world, including Pebble Beach Golf Links in California.

Mistwood Golf Dome is the first golf dome in America with Toptracer Range technology. Jim McWethy, owner of Mistwood Golf Club in Romeoville, purchased the former Ditka Dome a few years ago with the express goal of evolving it into the metro area's premier indoor range. While improved lighting and atmosphere were elements of that plan, the opportunity to introduce the Toptracer Range technology to the facility immediately intrigued him. "Andy (Mickelson) and Dan (Bradley) came up with the idea to bring Toptracer to the dome," McWethy recalled during grand opening ceremonies. Mickelson is Mistwood's director of golf, Bradley the general manager. "It was an incredible opportunity to upgrade the facility and bring something new and exciting for our guests to enjoy," McWethy added.

Mickelson echoed McWethy's sentiments. "Our goal from the outset of buying the dome was to provide an experience for our guests that they couldn't get anywhere else in the metro area. We're convinced that Toptracer Range is the home run we were looking for. The feedback you get when using this system is critical for game improvement. But just as importantly, golfers have a real blast using Toptracer both as a learning tool and for competition with friends."

All 30 hitting bays at the dome are equipped with Toptracer Range technology which involves four overhead cameras that read, interpret and record the result of each player's shots. As a teaching tool, the system can tabulate the results of multiple shots taken with each club to provide insights on all facets of one's performance.

Six games are available on the system. Launch Monitor is a training mode that registers distance, ball speed and height to compare with others in your group. Points Game is a challenge competition based upon proximity to targets stationed across the landing areas. Long Drive turns the dome into a long drive grid on who among your group can do the best Brooks Koepka imitation. Closest To the Pin rewards the most accurate shots in a group. What's In My Bag reveals the most accurate player over the entire spectrum of clubs. By far the most popular competition at the facility is Virtual Game which allows players to play a virtual round at a world renowned golf course.

During my last session at the dome, I used Toptracer Range to focus on wedge shots and 9-iron shots of my favorite hole in America

Toptracer Makes an Impact at Mistwood

By Neal Kotlarek

– the iconic No. 7 at Pebble Beach. Played from a tee perched high above a putting surface which rests on the edge of a cliff overlooking the Pacific Ocean, the hole is a mere 107 yards, made even shorter due to the steep decline. Wind plays a factor on the hole, of course, and sand bunkers protect the front of the green. One by one by one, I aimed my shots toward target flags set up around the dome at varying lengths. I would strike my shots toward the flagstick and would admire the image of the 7th green on the screen above the hitting bay. A streak on the screen indicated the exact arc of my shot and where on the green (or, in one case, the ocean) my ball would land. The experience was a wonderment for a guy who grew up hitting striped Wilson K-28s at a rugged driving range built next to a used car lot on the south side of Milwaukee.



After hitting about

25 shots on the iconic par 3, I was ready to enjoy still another amenity provided at the sports complex. The entire teaching staff at Mistwood Golf Club has taken winter residence at the dome. This talented roster of PGA teaching pros includes the aforementioned Mickelson, winner of the 39th PGA Assistant Championship four years ago, and the affable Dan Phillips, teacher and player development director at the club.

My instructor on this day was none other than the newest member of Mistwood's teaching staff, Nicole Jeray.

"Looking for a little more loft on your approach shots?" Jeray asked, studying my ball flight and the computer data. A slight adjustment of my stance and shoulder position happily provided immediate results. A star at the University of Northern Illinois where she won eight collegiate tournaments, Jeray was the youngest athlete elected to the NIU athletic Hall of Fame. She played on the LPGA Tour for almost two decades and also enjoyed stints on the LPGA Symetra Futures Tour and on the LPGA Legends Tour.

"I've been a fan of Mistwood ever since the club began hosting the Illinois Women's Open in 1998," Jeray said. "I cannot imagine the opportunity to teach the game at a better facility."

As with most of the other teaching staff members, Jeray will transition to the Mistwood Golf Club Learning Center during the spring, summer and fall seasons. One of her goals as a Mistwood teacher is to develop teaching programs geared to women and girls and to expand Mistwood's elite junior program that prepares high schoolers for collegiate golf.

The Mistwood Golf Dome is a fully heated 60,000 sq. ft. facility that offers a full service restaurant and sports bar, operating throughout the winter until April 30. Hourly rates per hitting bay are \$30 weekdays. That works out to a reasonable \$7.50 per person in a foursome.

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Vegas Neighbor Summerlin has Glitz of its Own

Just off Interstate 15, and near the home of the PGA Tour's Shriners Hospitals for Children Open in Las Vegas, you'll find three golf courses created by three-time major winner Billy Casper and design partner Greg Nash. The Highland Falls, Palm Valley and Eagle Crest courses, located within the Sun City Summerlin community and managed by Golf Summerlin, are well conditioned, challenging, affordable and enjoyable.

"This is the best place to play in town," said Greg Wickensimer, Eagle Crest's head pro. "We have three great golf courses, two championship-style and an executive course. There is truly something for all ages and skill levels."

All three of the courses offer playability and affordability. If you're looking for golf courses that are fun to play and always in great shape, check out any of the three courses at Golf Summerlin.

Director of golf Donny Long said, "Golf Summerlin's courses are among the best maintained in southern Nevada. Most believe Golf Summerlin is private as we are a bit of a hidden gem, but all three courses are public and open to outside play. Highland Falls is a five-time winner, including the last four years in a row, of the *Review-Journal's* Best of Las Vegas award."

The courses aren't cookie-cutter layouts. "Golf Summerlin offers three very unique and different golf experiences, each with its own charm," said Highland Falls head pro Jim Neighbors. "Hole 14 at Highland Falls is my favorite par 3 in Las Vegas. The tee sits about 40 feet above the green, so picking the correct club is the key to playing this hole well and there is not a better view of the Las Vegas valley than on the tee box at 14."

You'll love the resort-like atmosphere at Highland Falls and Palm Valley – without the sticker shock. Long says Highland Falls tends to be the favorite for most out-of-towners due to its spectacular conditions, elevation changes and the views. Palm Valley is a more traditional layout, flatter but longer, with well-placed bunkers and outstanding conditions. Eagle Crest has become a favorite for many due to the quick pace of play and playability.

"Palm Valley is a very player-friendly course," added head pro Shane Sanchez. "While there are plenty of challenges for players of all skill levels, most golfers leave the course satisfied."

"The private feel at Golf Summerlin is a bonus," says Long. "And our friendly, knowledgeable staff will just add to that feeling as you play, dine and shop here."

Seasoned golf writer and Las Vegas native Bill Bowman wrote the following when describing the Golf Summerlin layouts:

"Highland Falls is the cornerstone course of the trio. It plays just 6,512 yards from the tips, but it's a challenge from start to finish."

Agreeing with Neighbors, Bowman wrote, "Elevation changes, bunkering and water hazards abound, but it's the 14th hole that will leave players breathless. The view on the 206-yard par-3 hole is one of the best around. Players are perched on an elevated tee looking down to a large green. But it's the backdrop that will have players grabbing for their cameras. The entire Las Vegas Strip sits stunningly in the background."

Palm Valley, at 6,900 yards, is the longest of the three courses. But don't let the length scare you – there are plenty of scoring chances on the course, especially on the first and 18th holes. Both are par 5s playing around 540 yards so players have the option of going for the green in two and setting up possible eagle putts to start and finish the round in style.

Then there's Eagle Crest. This executive course (4,067 yards) has become a favorite for many players. There are 12 par 3s, along with six par 4s, that will let players get in a quick round, while still giving them plenty of challenges along the way. The par-3 holes range in length from 115 yards to 224 yards, so it's definitely not a pitch-and-putt course and you'll use every club in your bag.

Sometimes "build it and they will come" isn't the answer. A few years ago Golf Summerlin professionals, with the expertise of the Citywide Golf Solutions staff, hit the road, meeting with golfers across the country, putting the courses' scenic layouts on display both in person and in all forms of traditional and digital marketing. Now, to put it in golf terms, Golf

Summerlin's stay-and-play experience is in red numbers – well under par and at the top of the leaderboard.

"After nearly 30 years of Las Vegas golf existence it was time for us to sing our praises to the masses," Long said. "While we have forever known that our quality of courses, professional service and challenging play offer a great golf experience, it wasn't until we first started attending national golf shows that we realized that the stay-and-play golf market was a bit oblivious to our part of the Las Vegas golf world."

The feedback from players of all abilities, from across the country, has been nothing but positive. Low or high handicap players love the Golf Summerlin getaways because it offers what every golfer is searching for in a golf vacation of any length: great course conditions, comfortable accommodations and a fair price. Of course it doesn't hurt that just down the road is the famed Las Vegas Boulevard, waiting to celebrate every round under par or to help pay out lost bets.

The manicured conditions and club-like atmosphere of these courses are at odds with the pricing, especially when considering other higher-end, sexier courses in the area. At Golf Summerlin the advantage goes to the visiting golfer.

"The private feel is a bonus," says Long. "Not only are you secluded in a beautiful community but you will enjoy the mountain scenery as we are located on the base of Vegas' scenic mountain range. Our courses sit at 3,000-foot-plus elevation, making us about five degrees cooler than most of the Las Vegas area."

Golf Summerlin is the "home course" for the Southern Nevada Golf Association and hosts many amateur championships and junior events throughout the year.

Yes, Las Vegas is built on fast-paced, neon-encrusted fun, including some of its more popular golf courses, but if you're looking for wallet-friendly, scenic but challenging golf with a variety of design and personalized service, look here first: www.golfsummerlin.com.

Cody Law is the executive director of Golf Mesquite Nevada.



Highland Falls Hole 17



Palm Valley Hole 8



Eagle Crest Hole 1



Arrowhead
630-653-5800
26W151 Butterfield Rd.
Wheaton, IL 60189
arrowheadgolfclub.org

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www.balmoralwoods.com

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Bowes Creek Country Club
847-214-5880
1250 Bowes Creek Blvd.
Elgin, Illinois 60124
bowescreekcc.com

Ranked as *Golfweek's* Best Courses You Can Play, Bowes Creek Country Club gives you every option to play your ideal round of golf. Along with annual memberships, we offer a "member-for-a-day" pass, allowing you the privilege to play unlimited golf with cart as well as full use of the practice facility. If playing a quick round of nine or eighteen holes suits your game better, we offer that as well. Bowes Creek allows the public golfer to experience the private club, without an annual membership.



The Preserve at Oak Meadows
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www.foxbendgolfcourse.com

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2901 W. Lake Ave.
Glenview, IL 60026
theglenclub.com

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Cantigny Golf
630-668-8463
27w270 Mack Rd.
Wheaton, IL 60189
cantignygolf.com

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Maple Meadows Golf Club
630-616-8424
272 Addison Rd.
Wood Dale, IL 60191
DuPageGolf.com

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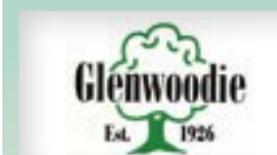
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Glenview, IL 60025
golfglenview.com

Experience pure golfing enjoyment at the Glenview Park Golf Club. After a complete renovation in 2014-2015, the course has re-opened to rave reviews. Bent grass from tee to green, rolling fairways, and meticulous landscapes await you on this 18-hole, 6,133 yard par-70 course. The Glenview Park Golf Club offers the amenities of a private club, but is open to the public and close to home. *Golf Inc* magazine voted the Glenview Park Golf Club the Best Renovation of the Year in 2016. Come out to see what everyone is talking about. Host of the USGA - 2017 U.S. Women's Amateur Four-Ball Qualifier.



Glenview Prairie Club
847-657-1637
2800 W. Lake Ave.
Glenview, IL 60026
golfglenview.com

Meticulous conditions like no other 9-hole course • Affordable Rates. • 4 sets of tees to meet all skill levels • 90 minute pace of play for a quick 9 • Challenging, fun, and enjoyable for all. After your round stop in for a cold beverage in our beautiful clubhouse setting overlooking the 9th green. Craft Beers, Fine Wines sport and soft drinks available. Make Glenview Prairie Club your home club for a premier 9-hole experience!



Glenwoodie Golf Club
708-758-1212
19301 S State St.
Glenwood, IL 60425
glenwoodiegolf.com/

Glenwoodie, just 25 minutes from Chicago, has been a favorite championship course for serious and recreational golfers in Chicago and Northwest Indiana for over 90 years. Consistently ranked in the top 35 public courses, the 18-hole, par-72, 6902-yard course features bent-grass fairways and large rolling greens surrounded by groves of majestic oaks. • 14,000 sq. ft. Clubhouse and Community Center with Fully Stocked Golf Shop • Full Service Bar and Grille, and Outdoor Patio • Electric Cart Fleet • Lighted Practice Range/PGA Professional Staff



Golf Center Des Plaines
847-803-GOLF
353 N River Rd.
Des Plaines, IL 60016
GolfCenterDesPlaines.com

9 Holes: Par 27 Yardage: 80 - 210 Chicagoland's only fully-lighted 9-hole course is open late year-round, and until midnight May-Fall. The 80-bay lighted and heated Driving Range is one of the Top 50 Ranges in the country: automatic ball tee-up, 300-yard outdoor landing area, plus 11 grass tees. The 1-1/2 acre Short Game Area features three sand bunkers and multiple putting greens; you can practice chip shots from up to 60 yards out. Unlimited Memberships are available for the Course and Short Game, and the Driving Range. Restaurant, Sports Bar, Pro Shop, and GolfTec Lessons.



Harborside International G.C.

312-782-7837
11001 S. Doty Ave. East
Chicago, IL 60628
harborsidegolf.com

Located just south of the loop in the City of Chicago, Harborside features two championship-style links courses designed by renowned architect Dick Nugent.

Harborside is home to Chicago's largest practice facility, a prairie-style clubhouse, and The Pier at Harborside restaurant.

Harborside's Port and Starboard courses rank annually among the Midwest's list of best courses you can play.



Heritage Bluffs Public Golf Club

815-467-7888
24355 W. Bluff Rd.
Channahon, IL 60410
heritagebluffs.com

18 Holes: Par 72
Yardage: 5,035- 7,171
Located near the intersection of Interstates 80 and 55 just south of Joliet, Heritage Bluffs is the pride of the Channahon Park District. The tranquil surroundings make a day playing golf fun and relaxing.

Along with our award-winning course we also feature a large all-grass practice range along with a large putting green and a separate chipping green and bunker. After your round you can relax in our Grille Room or out on the patio, enjoying a full menu of delicious food and beverage choices.



The Highlands of Elgin

847-931-5950
875 Sports Way
Elgin, IL 60123
highlandsofelgin.com

The Highlands of Elgin has become a premier destination for thousands of golfers throughout the region. Nine new holes reclaim an old stone quarry, and take maximum advantage of the unique and dramatic landforms that were left behind, including a twelve-acre quarry lake. Four holes hug the top of the bluff thirty to forty feet above the water, providing golfers with incredible views and numerous shot options on each hole. The prairie-style clubhouse features an expanded golf shop, locker rooms, event rooms, and a full-scale food and beverage operation.



Mistwood Golf Club

815-254-3333
1700 W. Renwick Rd.
Romeoville, IL 60446
mistwoodgc.com

Mistwood Golf Club, with its recent multi-million dollar renovations and new state of the art golf-learning center, has become one of the premier golf experiences in the Chicagoland area

Mistwood, host of the Illinois Women's Open, features new Scottish-style stacked sod-wall bunkers, which are not something seen in traditional American golf. Other amenities include a full-service pro shop, golf instruction, and wonderful dining.

- *Golf Magazine's* "2013 Best U.S. Renovation You Can Play"
- Golf Range Association of America "2013 Top 50 Golf Ranges."



Ravisloe Country Club

708-798-5600
18231 Park Ave,
Homewood, IL 60430
ravisloe.com

Ravisloe Country Club has been one of the most acclaimed golf courses in Chicagoland since its inception. Bearing the signature of world-renowned course designer Donald Ross, it has played host to many great golfers and features rolling mounds, deep bunkers and challenging greens. Located just 25 minutes from Chicago, 10 miles from the Indiana state line and across the street from the Homewood Metra Station, Ravisloe is your one stop destination. Wine-Dine-Stay-Play with Ravisloe, La Voûte Bistro and La Banque Hotel.



St. Andrews Golf & Country Club

630-231-3100
2241 Route 59
West Chicago, IL 60185
standrewsgc.com

36 Holes:
Course #1: par 71,
5116 - 6920 yards
Course #2: par 72,
5341 - 6818 yards
Since 1926, golfers have sought out St. Andrews for its two championship courses. With its vast rolling terrain and mature trees, St. Andrews offers a high-quality golf experience for players, golf outings, leagues, and permanent tee-times. Guests will also enjoy the award-winning 32-acre Practice Center with premium range balls and 10 heated, sheltered hitting bays. Other amenities: golf carts with GPS, J.J.'s Bar & Grill, exquisite lakeside ceremony site, and live entertainment.



Springbrook Golf Course

630-848-5060
2220 W. 83rd St.
Naperville, IL 60564
golfnaperville.org

Springbrook Golf Course commands some of the finest views of Naperville's open space and trails. The facility features a challenging, parkland-style championship course, a recently renovated practice facility with a one-acre turf practice tee, a large practice putting green, and two short-game practice greens with bunkers. Golfers of all skill levels return time and again to play. Enjoy post-game refreshments on the expansive patio with great views of the course. Springbrook also offers lessons, outings, a well-stocked golf shop, and more.



Stonewall Orchard

847-740-4890
25675 West Highway 60
Grayslake, IL 60030
stonewallorchard.com

Cutting through hundred-year old oak and pine trees, Stonewall Orchard Golf Club has quickly become one of Chicago's most prolific public golf courses.

Since opening in 1999, the Arthur Hills-designed gem located in northwest suburban Grayslake has served as Final Stage Qualifying site for the U.S. Open, and currently sits in rotation with Olympia Fields and Medinah Country Club as host site for the Illinois PGA Section Championship held every Fall.



Mt. Prospect Golf Club

847-259-4200
600 See Gwun Ave.
Mt. Prospect, IL 60056
golfmtprospect.com

The newly restored Mt. Prospect GC will take you back to a style of architecture made famous by names like Raynor, MacDonald, and Ross, with low square tee boxes, strategic cross bunkers, and challenging plateau greens, all in our quiet parkland setting. The redesign features most of the original routing, plus five new holes and historic "template holes" with names like Redan, Eden, and Punchbowl.

Mt. Prospect is the closest thing to the conditions and feel of an old private club, with a daily fee rate. Come back to a new 90-year-old classic.



Naperbrook Golf Course

630-378-4215
22204 W. 111th St. /
Hassert Blvd.
Plainfield, IL 60585
golfnaperville.org

Located in Plainfield, scenic Naperbrook Golf Course is a "links style" course that features rolling hills and wide fairways. Challenges in the way of ponds, a double green, and hidden bunkers await golfers of all levels. Additional amenities include a ten-acre driving range, separate lesson tee, and practice putting greens. Enjoy post-game refreshments on the picturesque patio; Naperbrook also offers lessons, outings, a well-stocked golf shop, and much more.



Orchard Valley Golf Course

630-907-0500
2411 W. Illinois Ave.
Aurora, IL 60506
orchardvalleygolf.com

6th Best Public Course in Illinois by *GOLF* magazine. One of Chicagoland's best public courses, *Golf Digest* ranks Orchard Valley 4½ Stars! A true championship layout featuring wetlands, lakes, roughs, water hazards, marshes, and more.

PLUS...a program for everyone!

- SAVE on every round with the OV Rewards PLUS program.
- UNLIMITED twilight golf and range with the PPP card.
- Annual Memberships and MORE!



PGA TOUR Superstore

1017 Butterfield Rd.
Downers Grove, 60515
1319 E. Golf Rd.
Schaumburg, 60173
295 Center Dr. Vernon Hills,
60061

PGA TOUR Superstore carries the largest selection of golf clubs, clothing, footwear, and accessories for your game. With the most advanced technology for club fitting, we also offer the Fitting Van Experience which is a TOUR caliber assessment. With three Chicagoland locations, come see why nothing compares to PGA TOUR Superstore.



Tam O'Shanter Golf Course & Learning Center

847-965-2344
6700 West Howard Street
Niles, IL 60714
golftam.com

One of the most important courses in popularizing the game of golf in America is located right here in Niles, Illinois. In 1953, Tam O'Shanter Country Club hosted the first-ever nationally televised golf tournament.

Today, a public 9-hole par-33 course remains, maintained with the goal of providing playing conditions reminiscent of those Hogan, Palmer, and Nicklaus enjoyed years ago. Swing out for a scenic round and walk in the footsteps of legends at Tam O'Shanter!
Year-round instruction available!



Water's Edge Golf Course

708-671-1032
7205 West 115th St.
Worth, IL 60482
watersedgegolf.com

Rated Best Places To Play by *Golf Digest*.
Water's Edge is Chicago's south side destination course. This championship 18-hole golf course offers bent grass greens and fairways, and a complete day/night practice and range facility, along with The Edge Bar & Grill for great meals and daily specials.

PLUS...a program for everyone!

- SAVE on every round with the Edge PLUS Pass
- UNLIMITED twilight golf and range with the Edge Practice Club



Weber Park Golf Course

847-674-1500, ext. 3600
skokieparks.org
9 Holes: Par 27
Yardage: 1,095

Located just twenty minutes north of Chicago on I-94, all ages will enjoy Skokie's Weber Park Golf Course. This 9-hole, par-3 golf course features bent grass greens, beautiful landscaping, and is ideal for learning to play golf, working on your short game, or gathering a few friends for a fun round of FootGolf.

PLUS...a program for everyone!

- SAVE on every round with the Whisper Rewards PLUS program
- UNLIMITED twilight golf and range with the PDP card
- Annual Memberships and MORE!



Whisper Creek Golf Course

847-515-7680
12840 Del Webb Blvd.
Huntley, IL 60142
whispercreekgolf.com

Luxury Golf at a Whisper of a Price!

Whisper Creek Golf Club is a fair test for a gamut of golfers. From beginners to scratch golfers, anyone who appreciates a day on the course will come away feeling rewarded by a round at Whisper Creek.

PLUS...a program for everyone!

- SAVE on every round with the Whisper Rewards PLUS program
- UNLIMITED twilight golf and range with the PDP card
- Annual Memberships and MORE!

Oh, Doctor! An Encompassing Study of Golf's Professionals

When a book arrives that weighs as much or more than a newborn child, the thought comes to mind that it may well be less than its weight in gold, even if it doesn't require burping.

Not so with *Doctors of the Game – A History of the Golf Profession*, for which the detailed documentation and lively writing on a rarely-covered department of the game is matched by the elegant production.

Billy Dettlaff, who grew up as the son of a golf professional in Oshkosh, Wis., and briefly toiled as a reporter and editor for a chain of northwest suburban weeklies before turning pro himself and settling in at TPC Sawgrass, has turned out a masterwork.

Like the game itself, it appears daunting at first blush, but keeps luring you back in.

He notes in the introduction that when he started taking classes on his road to a PGA of America membership, he expected instruction on the history of golf professionals, and received none. He's made up for it for generations to come. The author of PGA Centennial, that organization's 100th anniversary celebration of itself, Dettlaff created that work as an abridged version of this one, a nine-pound tome covering the profession from the days before Allan Robertson of St. Andrews, generally recognized as the first professional golfer, to today's modern pro, who takes reservations by computer and is often more concerned with shop inventory than rebuilding clubs.

Seven years in the making, the sweep of the centuries takes time to detail, and Dettlaff smartly does most of the traveling through over 100 mini-biographies of prominent pros, some of them players, some of them teachers, some of them architects (Tom Bendelow, long based in Chicago, is pages away from the better-known and nearly-as-prolific Donald Ross), some of them promoters.

Joe Jemsek, Chicago's very own, is best characterized as a promoter, and earned eight of the 696 pages. For one who knew the patron saint of public golf, there are new stories, and new details within old stories, including on how he built up his business at St. Andrews in West Chicago by appealing to both fraternal groups and blue-collar workers.

"A popular play on his factory visits was to shout out: 'Anyone here used to be a cad-die?'" Dettlaff wrote.

"Inevitably, someone would answer in the affirmative, leading Jemsek to name him the chairman of the company's new golf league."

Dettlaff traces the birth of American golf through more than biographies of the brothers Foulis and Smith (to name just two families); the growth of the game here via notables including Johnny Farrell and Gene Sarazen and characters like George Low (in whose story Jemsek has a cameo role); and the explosion of interest in it following World War II through the teaching Harmon family and Milwaukee legend Manuel de la Torre, who got his start as an assistant at Lake Shore Country Club in Highland Park.

Happily, Dettlaff didn't ignore the growth of women's professional golf. Several thousand of the approximately 450,000 words and 335 illustrations are devoted to the ladies. If you didn't know there was a women's circuit before the LPGA, this book will fill you in.

All of this – and there is a lot – is displayed on silky oversize pages that, to fit it all in, has slightly narrower margins and smaller type than a book with 9-by-12 inch pages might normally carry. But it's all in one volume, which was the idea.

Remarkably, Dettlaff self-published the book, taking on a considerable financial risk. It's paid off, he told an interviewer, and thus he's recently lowered the prices for the three editions – the standard trade edition at \$150 (the price of a new wedge), a slipcased limited-edition which now goes for \$200 (the original price of the standard version), and a handmade leather-bound edition that, at \$1,200, comes with everything but a set of hickories. Add them all up, and there are only 1,000 copies.

Buy it for the knowledge and the lore, wallow in it on a chilly winter night, and know that it will only go up in value.

Doctors of the Game – A History of the Golf Profession By Billy Dettlaff
WJD Press

696 pages; three editions (\$150; \$200 limited to 400 copies; \$1,200 limited to 55 copies)

www.doctorsofthegame.com

Ball of Confusion

Let's clear up some confusion right away. This column is about the Benziger winery of Sonoma, *not* the Beringer winery of Napa. But people often make this mistake, as Chris Benziger can attest to.

In the early 1980s, the Benziger family migrated west from White Plains, N.Y. to start a winery in Sonoma. Winemaker Joe Benziger learned his craft by making large production wines for the Glen Ellen brand, but eventually decided that his future lay with a series of small, artisan wines, sustainably produced.

Depending on location, every Benziger vineyard is certified sustainable, organic, or biodynamic, using the most up-to-date green farming practices. But, just what does that mean? Green, sustainable, and organic are words that are often used rather casually. At Benziger, they try to be more precise. Their third-party certified-sustainable vineyard program emphasizes environmentally-sound growing methods, such as biodiversity, soil revitalization, and integrated pest management. Their growers are required to participate in sustainable farming. Organic grape growing avoids the use of synthetic chemicals and uses natural methods like crop rotation, tillage, and natural composts to maintain soil health, as well as natural methods to control weeds, insects, and other pests. The winery itself is certified organic, too.

Organic is an evolutionary step up from sustainable. After that, many Benziger growers move on from certified organic to certified biodynamic. Animals and beneficial gardens play an important part in biodynamic farming techniques. Benziger relies on sheep for the removal of overgrown cover crop, and they replace the need for mowing, disking, and spraying herbicides; they aerate the soil while continuously depositing nutrient-rich fertilizer throughout the vineyard. Olive trees also support the health of the estate.

2017 Pinot Noir \$20
Even though deceptively transparent in the glass and light bodied, this Pinot

packs plenty of flavor. The immediate sensation is that of cola, followed by juicy fruits, especially strawberry, and subtle spices. The acidity and tannins are in nice harmony.

Invite some friends over and serve this with roast chicken with endive and potatoes, baked fish with sorrel béarnaise (Pinot Noir often works with fish), or lentils with vinaigrette.

2016 Cabernet Sauvignon \$20
This dark-ruby colored wine is very much in a European, rather than California, style. It is quite dry, with zippy acidity. There are flavors of rich berry, cocoa, and mocha, with a hint of cinnamon. Seamless tannis play a supporting role.

This hearty red will go nicely with paté with herbs, steak with shallot sauce, or braised short ribs with carrots.



smhawk@ayainc.com

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IN THE NATION AS CHOSEN BY
Readers of USA TODAY & 10Best

Doctors of the Game
A History of the Golf Profession



The Canal Shores Land Grab of 2019

Canal Shores Golf Course will be celebrating its 100th anniversary in 2019, unless, of course, the Cook County Board authorizes an estimated \$700,000 to build an asphalt road on its 10th fairway as a favor to a local real estate developer with the strongest of political connections.

The 180-yard par 3 10th – where Bill Murray once ran the hot dog stand – is 80 feet wide. The proposed road would be 142 yards long and 60 feet wide. The obliteration of the hole would transform Canal Shores into a 17-hole course, effectively killing it.

If that happens, the taking of public land for private use will be nothing to celebrate for any Illinois resident, let alone local golfers.

Seldom do golf and Machine politics intersect, but Canal Shores finds itself at this very precarious crossroads.

Founded in 1919, Canal Shores – formerly known as Peter N. Jans Community Golf Course after its founder – runs along the North Shore Channel of the Sanitary and Ship Canal.

Traversing the borders of Evanston and Wilmette, Canal Shores is a par 60 featuring 12 par 3s and six par 4s – a not-too-easy-not-too-hard track perfect for everyone's golf games and personal time-pars. A non-profit entity that receives no taxpayer money, it conducts junior programs, charity outings, and a concert series. Fans of Northwestern football park their cars on the course, helping the course's bottom line.

More than a golf course, Canal Shores serves as a "community green" open to all. Joggers, dog walkers, nature lovers, birdwatchers and cross-country skiers take in the outdoors. It's reminiscent of golf's original course, St. Andrews in Scotland.

In 1988 and 2002, the Dick Keefe Development Corporation acquired 1.1 acres of landlocked property adjacent to Canal Shores on the east, the CTA rail tracks on the south, Isabella Woods Forest Preserve on the west, and seven single-family homes to the north. Keefe bought the land at a steep discount knowing there was no road to access it. The property lies in Wilmette.

Frustrated by his inability to develop the property into four upscale homes, Keefe enlisted the aid of Illinois Senate President John Cullerton (D-Chicago), who listed Keefe on his Statement of Economic Interests in 2018.

Cullerton, one of Illinois' most powerful politicians, also is serving as the company's attorney in the matter. The Cullerton family has been involved in

Chicago politics since 1871, the year of the Chicago fire, with only one gap of 15 years for a Cullerton to not serve in public office from then to now.

On November 15, 2018, the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District board – which controls the land because it oversees the Canal – voted 5-4 to grant an easement enabling the county board to build the road. Cullerton lobbied in favor of the road. And, in reality, the vote wasn't that close.

Of the three dozen people who spoke at two MWRD meetings only one was in favor: Joe Keefe, a spokesman for the family trust. The City of Evanston, Wilmette Park District, Friends of the Chicago River, local golfers and other environmental groups opposed the road.

Local residents were aghast that the MWRD commissioners ignored their opposition voices. Perhaps they believed – naively – that the small "d" democracy they read about in their grade school civics books actually applies in big "D" Chicago Democratic Machine politics.

Some may wonder how Cullerton could influence the votes of the MWRD board members. Each part-time board member collects \$70,000 annually plus medical and pension benefits. He or she who wants to be a Democratic candidate for the board – or future considerations post-board service – does as Cullerton says, courting his influence on who gets slated or who doesn't.

Another thing. Cook County Commissioner Larry Suffredin (D-Evanston) lives down the street from Canal Shores. Suffredin has neither spoken publicly about the controversy nor testified against the road at the hearing. WBBM-TV's Derrick Blakely reported Cullerton bankrolled Suffredin's first political campaign, donating \$50,000 years ago.

Keefe recently told reporters the family company would prefer to access the property another way. Yet in approximately 2007, when Keefe had a chance to gain access via a strip of land adjacent to the CTA tracks, the company passed.

Environmentalists – a group including golfers – are concerned. The 10th hole is one of the most ecologically sensitive in the community. The road would destroy one wetland and negatively impact two others, eliminating nearly 26,000 square feet of green space and endanger a stand of 100-year-old oaks lining the left side of the fairway.

The taking of public land for private use through political muscle ought to terrify everyone in Illinois.

More than just a
golf course, Canal
Shores serves as
a "community
green" open to all,
where joggers, dog
walkers, nature
lovers, birdwatchers
and cross-country
skiers take in
the outdoors.

The views and opinions expressed in this article are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of GOLFChicago.

Color Outside the Lines!

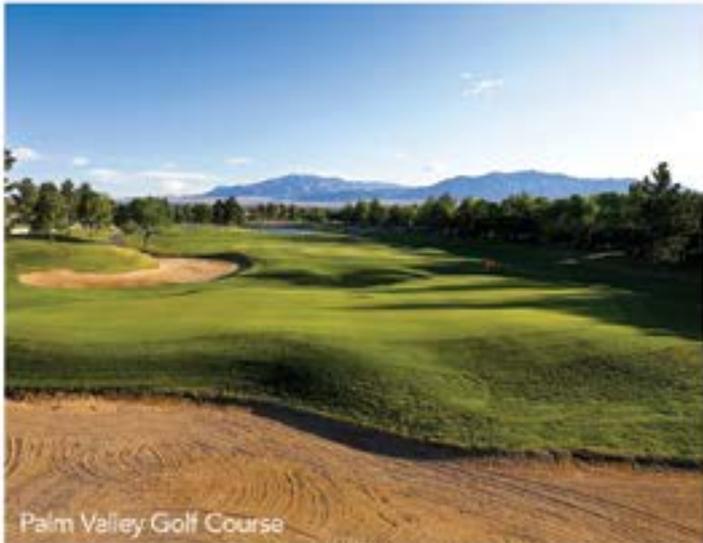


You've seen green grass and blue skies before, but mix that with the unique and colorful terrain of the Red Rock Golf Trail and you're in for a blast of color that will widen your eyes and revitalize your game. With courses like Sand Hollow, Green Spring, Dixie Red Hills and Coral Canyon, it's like Mother Nature went crazy and didn't know where to stop with her paint brush.

St. George, Utah is the new hot spot for destination golf trips and it's easy to see why. With 10 courses within a 10 mile radius, the Red Rock Golf Trail has everything you're looking for. Daily flights into SGU on American, Delta & United Airlines make getting there a cinch. Going home ... well, that may take some convincing.



Club Selection



Palm Valley Golf Course



Highland Falls Golf Course



Eagle Crest Golf Course

Choosing where to play golf in Las Vegas is as important as selecting the right club from your bag. Make the right shot by booking your next stay and play Vegas golf getaway with Golf Summerlin.

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